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## Byron Council pledges \$25,000 for new library

The members of the Byron City Council voted unanimously last Thursday night, June 23, to pledge — or commit — \$25,000 over the next two years for the construction of the proposed new library.

"Praise the Lord," exclaimed Mrs. Dot Williams immediately after the vote. Mrs. Williams had presented the request for the second time for the money.

Although saying little at the council meeting, it was reported by a reliable source that Director of Public Libraries Jimmy Smith shouted for joy immediately after leaving the building.

The vote to commit the \$25,000 was

followed immediately by a personal challenge from Mayor Protem Howard Hembree. First he calculated that he has 30 more months in his term of office, then he said he would donate his alderman's salary for 30 months to the library fund. He asked the other aldermen to follow suit.

There was a quick flurry of activity as the challenge was met.

Even Mayor Larry Collins, long known for his ability to out-fumble anyone for a luncheon check, agreed to match Hembree's pledge.

City Clerk Frances McDaniel quickly figured that the pledge from the

individual city officials amounts to \$3,780.

Mrs. Williams told the aldermen that she was making the request as "your representative on the Peach Public Libraries board." She outlined the fact that the new 4,000 sq. ft. library is planned to meet the needs of the entire north end of Peach County. She said that the present library facility is inadequate. Mrs. Williams also told the aldermen that the city needed to "nail down" the site for the library.

Mayor Collins told the aldermen that a lot on Church Street was the best available. He said that Hal Peavy owns the one-acre lot and that it has been

appraised for \$13,000. Peavy has offered to donate one half the value of the lot. Collins said that various people in town had expressed an interest in helping to buy the lot.

The council voted unanimously to commit for the purchase of the lot.

The new library will cost \$257,143, more than half of which will be provided by state funds. The Peach County Commissioners have already pledged \$25,000 for the library. After the city's commitment, a total of \$37,744 will have to be raised. City Clerk McDaniel and the Rev. Nathan Godley are jointly spearheading a community fund-drive effort.

### The Mayor was late - pays a price

At 7:02 p.m. Thursday night, June 23, a worried Frances McDaniel went to the telephone to call Byron Mayor Larry Collins to remind him that the City Council meeting should have started at 7:00 p.m.

Upon his arrival five minutes later he was greeted with a round of applause from the aldermen and the people in the audience. That prompted Alderman Bill Peeler to intone, "The LATE Mayor Larry Collins!"

Mayor Protem Howard Hembree offered that the reason the mayor was late was because he was outside the building doing some plea bargaining.

"No," Mayor Collins protested, "my wife and I were arguing about whether the meeting was supposed to start at 7:00 or 7:30."

"That means that she was right — as usual," said Alderman James Williams drily.